

A BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF THE
FENIAN RAIDS
ON
THE MISSISQUOI FRONTIER,
IN
1866 AND 1870.

WITNESS STEAM PRINTING HOUSE

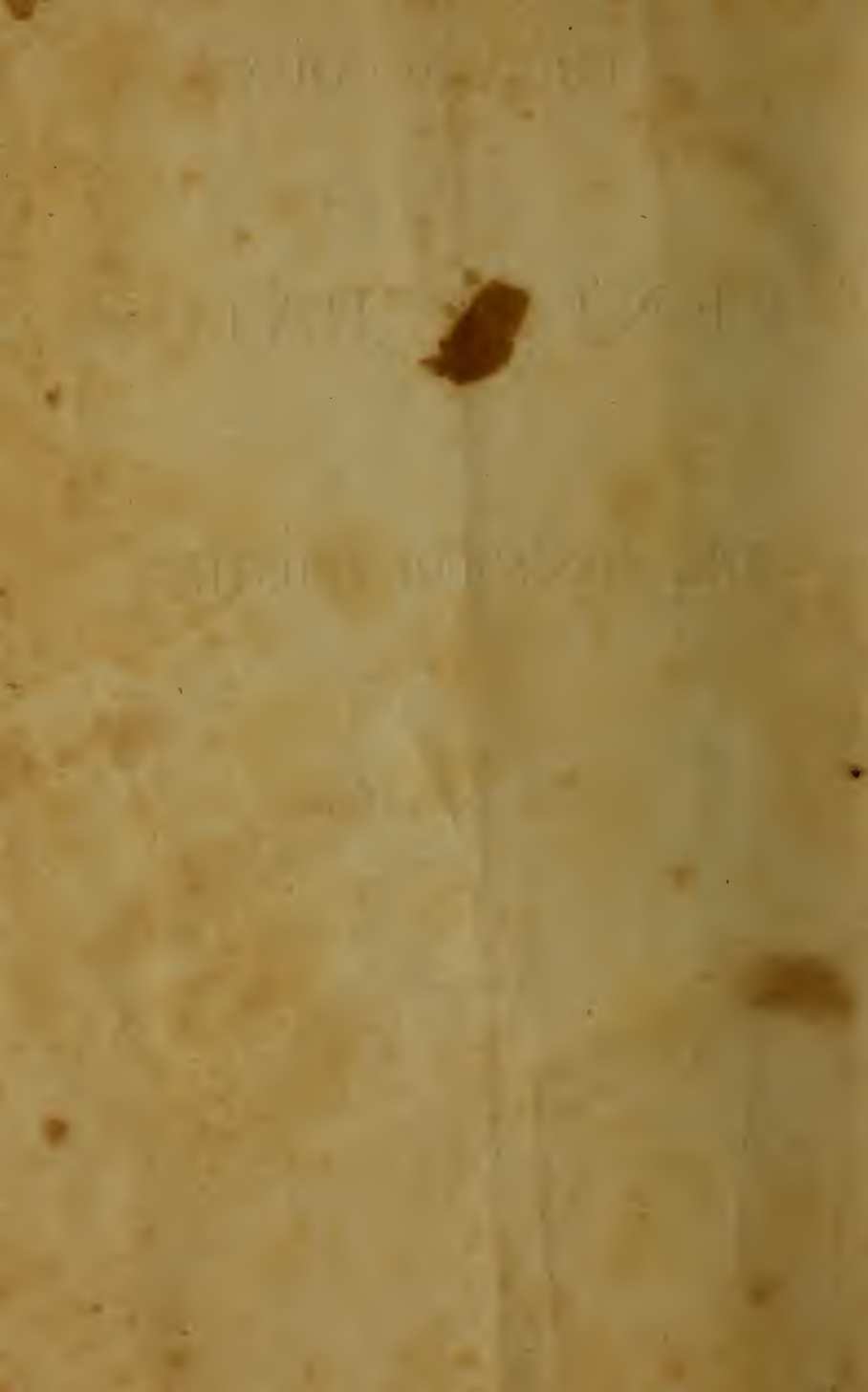
412 AND 410 ST. JAMES STREET, MONTREAL.

1871.

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The following "Brief account of the Fenian Raids on the Missisquoi Frontier" having been submitted to us, we cheerfully certify that it is what it purports to be, a correct statement of facts.

February 1, 1871.

EDWARD TITTEMORE,	-	-	-	Cook's Corner.
JAMES W. TOOF,	-	-	-	do.
ROBERT THOMSON,	-	-	-	do.
JOHN TOOF,	-	-	-	do.
ORVILLE REYNOLDS,	-	-	-	do.
ANDREW TEN EYCK,	-	-	-	Dunham.
ABRAM TITTEMORE,	-	-	-	Cook's Corner.
ZEB IRISH,	-	-	-	Lagrange.
NOAH SAGER,	-	-	-	Pigeon Hill.
JAMES WESTOVER,	-	-	-	Lagrange.
JAMES MCRAE,	-	-	-	Dunham.
ASA WESTOVER,	-	-	-	do.
H. TEN EYCK,	-	-	-	do.
M. P. REYNOLDS,	-	-	-	St. Armands East.
ISSAC LAGRANGE,	-	-	-	Lagrange.
NELSON VINCENT,	-	-	-	Cook's Corner.
S. N. HUNTER,	-	-	-	Lagrange.
ANTHONY GODDARD,	-	-	-	At the Lines.

Mr. Goddard and family took refuge in their cellar (as their house was between the fires), and from there saw the fight.

PREFACE

Judging from advertisements which have appeared in the journals of the day, as well as from circulars scattered abroad, that information is desired in regard to the Fenian Raids into Canada in 1866 and 1870, and also that the public mind is not satisfied with the reports which have gone the rounds of the newspapers, or these more lately circulated by a pamphlet issued from the WITNESS office, which so changes the acts that the actors in the scenes fail to recognize their own portraits, the author has compiled the following short sketch or history of those in the Missisquoi Frontier from statements well attested, obtained from persons who have been thoroughly acquainted with the facts from the first. It is designed, in the following pages, to show plainly how the Raid of 1870 was prepared for, and by whom repelled; also, what part was really acted on that occasion by the "Farmer Force," so lightly spoken of in the official reports of last May.

January, 1871.





FENIAN RAIDS OF 1866 AND 1870.

Immediately preceding the Fenian Raid into Canada, in the early part of June, 1866, our Militia officers along the frontier made application to the Government authorities to arm the men under their command, that the border town might be, in some slight manner at least, prepared to meet the marauders who were massing in the United States with openly-avowed intentions of at once invading our country.

The solicitations of these officers were, strangely enough as it would seem, disregarded, and the inhabitants along the Province Line were left in an entirely unprotected condition.

Times of ease and quiet are not the times for cultivating a martial spirit among a peace-loving community, and no wonder that scarcely a well-armed man was to be found amongst our Border farmers at this juncture.

After the reports of an immediate invasion had been fully confirmed by persons friendly to our interests, though residing in the United States—prominent among whom it may be proper here to mention was S. N. Hunter, at that time a resident of Sheldon, Vt.—a few companies of volunteers were collected and marched towards the front; but, while at St. Armand Station, they received peremptory orders to retreat, and were marched at an exhausting pace to St. Alexandre, leaving the inhabitants even more perplexed than before.

In consequence of this precipitate and forced retreat of men who would themselves have been right glad to face the bloody-minded Fenians in fair fight, there was literally nothing to oppose their way. They entered our country unmolested, selected their camping-ground, pitched their tents, and roamed at will through the deserted dwellings.

This raid, and the panic of our helpless people, as well as the tardy movements of the military authorities, will be long remembered amongst us.

A large part of St. Armand, including the villages of Frelighsburg and Pigeon Hill, and some portions of Stanbridge, were for days at the mercy of this band of plunderers.

The village of Frelighsburg was taken possession of by about 250 of the villains, the inhabitants leaving as they advanced.

The destruction of property was very considerable in both these villages, and some of our farmers had great reason to complain of the loss of their horses and the slaughter of their cattle and sheep; besides the use or waste of their stores of various kinds.

Very many persons in the vicinity, who did not leave their homes, removed their most valuable stock and goods farther from the frontier.

The Fenians held possession of Frelighsburg from Thursday afternoon, June 6th, until the following Saturday, occasionally sending out parties to plunder, who subjected many of the inhabitants who still remained in the neighborhood to annoyances and indignities almost beyond endurance; but, themselves unarmed and powerless, and the authorities apparently unmindful of their situation, what redress could be had?

The marauders remained in undisturbed possession of their new quarters, eating, drinking and destroying, till forces from Montreal were at last known to be nearing the spot. They then retreated in some confusion, and were received by many of their American brethren, if we may credit the statements made in their journals at the time, quite as heroes.

Very soon after the enactment of these disgraceful scenes, a few of our Border men in Dunham, aroused by them to a sense of our insecurity, determined to devise some plan for self-defence and the preservation of their homes in case of another raid, which, in short, began to be talked of on the other side almost as soon as the first was over.

Messrs. Asa Westover and Andrew Ten Eyck were the first and principal movers in this scheme, and neither spared time or expense to perfect the arrangements necessary for enabling the Borderers to act on the defensive. Their immediate neighbors joined with them, and entered heartily into the plans proposed.

These brave men, a mere handful as it were, to the number of sixteen, organized themselves at once into a company of sharp-

shooters, or riflemen, called the Home Guards, under Asa Westover, who was chosen their head officer—each man agreeing to furnish his own rifle and ammunition.

Mr. Westover and Mr. James Pell were deputed to select the rifles, and they, after visiting several manufactories in the United States, made choice of the Ballard Sporting Rifle, 30 inch, heavy barrel, procuring at the same time a quantity of cartridges to suit them.

This company had no regular drill, but agreed to practice with their rifles and meet occasionally for target-shooting.

Thus, in an unassuming manner, they were quietly, but surely, making the best preparation for the expected invasion.

This little band were under no military discipline, were subject to no military authority, but were bound together by a strong sense of the dangers and necessities of the times; and they were ready, one and all, to take up their arms at the first intimation of renewed hostilities on the part of the Fenians.

They were ridiculed by many; but, with true dignity, the sneers and the sneerers were alike unheeded by them, and they continued unremittingly to pursue the course they had marked out for themselves.

An occasional rumor of invasion kept them ever on the alert, and the vigilance of Mr. Westover and his men was never relaxed.

On the first of July, 1868, the feeling was so strong among our people that we might expect trouble from the Fenians, that Mr. Westover and Mr. Ten Eyck at that time examined more particularly than they had done before the country along the frontier, and selected positions to be occupied by the Home Guards on Eccles Hill should the enemy attempt to cross the boundary line, as it was expected they would, near that point.

The positions were chosen, and everything was done which prudence or foresight could dictate to ensure success in case of an attack.

It may not, perhaps, be out of place to state here that even at this early period the minds of many of the inhabitants appeared strongly to turn to this small company of men for protection in the event of danger; in illustration of which we will mention that when Mr. Westover and Mr. Ten Eyck had completed their

arrangements on Eccles Hill, they drove to Frelighsburg, where several companies of local volunteers were in camp for their yearly week's drill.

The moment these two gentlemen made their entrance into the village, they were met by several prominent men of the place—none of whom, however, had the slightest knowledge of the errand they had just been upon—with words like the following: “Just the men we wished to see! The men we rely on in an emergency like the present!”

Not long after this it was proposed to increase the number of the Home Guards, and about 25 names were added to their list, nearly all from Dunham. It was still a civil association, with president, vice-president and secretary.

It may not be amiss to state in this place that in the autumn of 1866 Mr. Westover had been requested to order 40 Ballard rifles for the inhabitants of Dunham, who had no connection at that time with the Home Guards.

After the alarm in April, 1870, this company reorganized with more of a military character. Mr. Westover was chosen captain, R. L. Galer, lieutenant, and James Galer, ensign, and at the same time a distinguishing badge was assumed, which was a red scarf worn over the right shoulder and fastened under the left arm.

Their final arrangements were completed not an hour too soon, as the feeling of insecurity never entirely died away among the inhabitants after the excitement in April.

In 1868, S. N. Hunter, mentioned above, having removed to Lagrange and joined the Home Guards, had made arrangements with a party living in the Fenian Stronghold, Fairfield, to give him timely warning in the event of another raid being premeditated; and, in accordance with these arrangements, he received notice about two o'clock on the afternoon of May 23rd, 1870, that there would be a move made that night, and, to all appearances, a pretty extensive one. He went directly to Captain Westover's, learned that he was from home, and his return not expected until night.

From there Mr. Hunter drove at once to Frelighsburg, saw Mr. Pattison and told him of the threatened invasion. This gentleman could scarcely be brought to credit the report, as every-

thing was so quiet. He thought, if trouble of that magnitude menaced the country, he would be sure to get the information through the Government channels. He could hardly think a private party would be likely to become possessed of reliable facts in such a case as soon as the Government.

Mr. Hunter, not wishing to cause unnecessary alarm, did not mention the subject to any others, but returned home and had a further consultation with his informant, after which he went directly back to Frelighsburg, saw Mr. Pattison, Doctor Chamberlin and Mr. Landsberg; but, as they had heard nothing from any other source, and there had been so many false alarms, they confessed themselves doubtful as to the correctness of the report.

Hunter, however, felt certain that his information could be relied on, and invited Mr. Pattison, as he was an influential man with the Government, to accompany him that night over the boundary line, to determine, if possible, whether there was to be a general movement, or simply a removal of a few cases of arms and stores to some hiding-place nearer the Border. But Mr. Pattison declining the invitation, a neighbor of Hunter's—a Mr. James Westover, also a member of the Guards—consented to bear him company on his somewhat hazardous enterprise.

As they were about leaving, Captain Westover drove up to learn the cause of Hunter's hasty call at his house. As soon as the case was laid before him, he offered to accompany them; but, on second thoughts, it was decided that he should return and warn a part of his men, and make immediate arrangements for notifying them all as soon as practicable after receiving their report.

On Captain Westover's return from Hunter's, he found reliable information awaiting him at his own residence. Parties living in Fairfax had come over, who gave almost the same account he had just heard, adding that the intention of the marauders was to cross over very soon, probably in less than twenty-four hours. The sequel will shew how their schemes were baffled by the men not being at hand to take the arms, how they were permitted to "confound each other," thus giving our people time for preparation.

Hunter and his companion crossed the Province Line, keep-

ing to the back roads—not supposing the Fenians would choose the nearer and more public thoroughfares by which to reach Canadian soil.

They discovered nothing of a suspicious character until they neared Franklin Village. There nearly every house was lighted, and the inhabitants were standing around the streets in small groups, as if in anxious expectation. On arriving at the Hotel they found friends from Sheldon—a town some eight miles from Franklin and adjoining Fairfield—who told them that they had passed on the roads several loads of what they believed to be Fenian arms drawn by Irishmen living in Fairfield and on Swanton Hill,—places where it was known there had been a supply of arms secreted in barns and out-buildings for several months; and we are credibly informed that some are still remaining there, having escaped the quick sight of the United States Marshal, who made a strict search for them. But this is a digression, whence, if the reader will excuse, we will return to Captain Westover's scouts.

They found one load of arms under the shed at the Hotel, driven there to protect them from the weather, as it was a very rainy night. It was now very near midnight, and soon eight more loaded teams drove up. The teamsters gave our spies the comforting assurance that the Green Flag would soon wave over the length and breadth of our Dominion!

Directly after this they returned and drove immediately to Frelighsburg to Mr. Pattison's. He accompanied them to the telegraph office, and a telegram was dispatched to a Government official. They then hastened to Doctor Chamberlin and communicated the alarming intelligence they had gathered to him. The Doctor at once sent two telegraphic despatches, one to Colonel Osborne Smith, the other to Colonel Chamberlin. This was between two and three o'clock on the morning of the 24th.

From Frelighsburg, Hunter and his companion went without delay to Captain Westover's, who had slept, as the saying is, "with one eye open," expecting further news every moment.

After a brief consultation, it was decided to take possession of Eccles Hill and hold it as long as possible.

Some description of the country immediately around this hill

should be given, in order that the reader may the better comprehend the situation of the small force designing to hold it.

The hill is one of a chain extending from Northern Vermont into Canada, and is situated just at the boundary line to the west, or right, of the road leading from Cook's Corner to Franklin. It is wooded and rocky, covered in many places with boulders, and might almost be termed a natural fortress, so perfect are its facilities for protecting a body of men who should avail themselves of the full strength of the position. It is, as has been said of it, "very defensible from both sides," and amongst its rocks, trees and brushwood, 300 men might be advantageously planted, completely hidden from an approaching enemy, and well sheltered from their fire.

An orchard lies directly below the hill, and an old stone wall, somewhat fallen to decay, separates it from a sloping open field, or pasture, lying nearer the line. Through this field, and close to the boundary, flows a brook, or small creek—its course being almost parallel with the line.

On the low ground between Eccles Hill and the hill on the Vermont side, are several dwellings, barns and other out-buildings, and a tannery; while on the other side—nearest the line—stand the residences of Chauncy and Alva Rykard, and, farther on, but yet in sight from Eccles, that of Vincent.

Any parties stationed near the base of the hill can have a fair view of an enemy crossing the boundary line, while the view of those stationed on the brow of the hill would be somewhat obstructed by the trees in the orchard immediately below.

The Guards on their way to Eccles Hill were to assemble at Cook's Corner, about two miles from Frelighsburg and the same distance from the Province Line, where they had reason to believe the Fenian thieves designed to cross over.

Although the morning was very unpropitious, owing to the steady fall of rain, yet, before eight o'clock, from ten to fifteen men of the Home Guards were at the appointed rendezvous, ready and even anxious for work. After this the company came in by twos and threes as fast as they were able after receiving notice of the threatening danger.

Captain Westover did not consider it safe to trust the flying reports of the hour for knowledge of the opposing force, but was

very anxious to procure the most correct information. Accordingly, Hunter volunteered to cross over and see how matters appeared in the Fenian camp, and what was the prospect of a speedy attack.

He found a large amount of what proved to be munitions of war, and there were continually fresh arrivals taking place, mostly from Fairfield.

Hunter, having formerly resided for several years in that town, was well known to many of the parties he saw on this occasion, and from some of them he learned that it was the intention of the Fenian leaders that the men should be at the Border in sufficient numbers to take the arms as fast as they were delivered, and cross over into the land of "promised farms and covered carriages" before the Canadians should be in the least aware of their movements. In expectation of their being in readiness to receive the loads, the teamsters had hurried on; but both leaders and teamsters were doomed to disappointment.

In order to carry into effect plans of such magnitude, every team in the vicinity belonging to Fenians or Fenian sympathizers was in requisition; and so willing had some of their owners been, that with the same team they drew two or more loads each during the night of the 23rd and the day following.

On arriving at Franklin, some two miles from the boundary, they found neither men nor officers at hand to receive the precious burden, and, in consequence of this failure, they drove their teams to Mr. Hubbard's—a place about half way from Franklin Village to the line—and unloaded their waggons under some large maple trees by the roadside.

Many of them returned for more arms, while others went towards St. Albans to meet and bring up the men. During the night of the 23rd, and the morning of the 24th, they had succeeded in getting 60 or 70 loads tumbled off, which filled up the roadside for some 10 or 12 rods.

In this condition Mr. Hunter found things; but he saw very few men except the teamsters. These were coming and going constantly, and they allowed him to pass along and examine their loads; but, on his attempting to return, he was halted by five or six armed men, who told him that at present he could not be per-

mitted to pass that way, but in a couple of hours they should move forward, when the road would be again open.

Hunter turned about, and was obliged to go some five or six miles around in order to reach Cook's Corner, where Captain Westover was awaiting him.

The Captain then took Hunter with him, and they proceeded to Frelighsburg to telegraph these facts to the Government, and to ascertain what assistance they might depend upon in this emergency.

In answer they received the crushing reply that the Government did not credit these reports! Any one doubting this is referred to Mr. Pattison, who was present. This was about 12 o'clock on the 24th.

On their way back to Cook's Corner, Captain Westover and Hunter conversed freely of the matter, and were agreed that, for the present, it would be better not to alarm or dishearten the men by telling them there was no prospect of help.

The inhabitants in the vicinity of Cook's Corner had nearly all taken their most valuable articles and left during the night and morning. Mr. Wellington Toof and family, however, remained, and through their kindness the Captain and about twenty or twenty-five of his men were provided with a warm and comfortable dinner, directly after which they started for Eccles Hill.

In the meantime the authorities of Franklin had caused the road to be opened to the public, and the Guards heard from there every few minutes by persons who were passing back and forth that the Fenian force was constantly increasing. They, of course, had learned that Captain Westover was at the front with his men, whose numbers had been greatly magnified by their friends, and the Fenians could easily infer for what purpose they were stationed there.

On the afternoon of the 24th, H. N. Whitman and G. Baker, Esquires, went to the authorities in Franklin, and endeavored to persuade them to seize the Fenian arms, and prevent their owners coming over into Canada to commit depredations.

Their reply was: "We have no authority, and, if we had, we have no men to assist us."

Mr. Whitman assured them that, if they required it, assistance could be rendered them in forty minutes to secure them all. This offer was declined.

About sundown Captain Westover held a consultation with his men, and a part of the force returned to their homes. Those who had been on duty the preceding night—S. N. Hunter and James Westover—were exhausted, and required rest. They were all to return on the following morning, and bring provisions for those who kept the night-watch. The names of those who remained, who literally took their lives in their hands, were :—Asa Westover, Andrew Ten Eyck, R. L. Galer, James McRae, David Westover,* Spenser Scott, John Pickering, Austin Hill, Lyman Call, James McElroy, George Longeway, Manville Rublee.

About nine o'clock on the evening of the 24th, a despatch was sent to Captain Westover at Eccles Hill. This telegram, as will be seen, was from Colonel Chamberlin to his uncle, Dr. G. Chamberlin, at Frelighsburg, and ran as follows :—

COPY OF THE TELEGRAM.

" 3 P. M.

FRELIGHSBURG, May 24th, 1870.

By Telegraph from Montreal.

TO G. CHAMBERLIN.

Westover and Red Scarf men should occupy old Fenian position at once, if possible, and pester the flank of any party crossing. I go to Stanbridge by next train.

(Signed,)

B. CHAMBERLIN, Lt.-Col."

This telegram contained the first encouraging word from any quarter, and inspired the little party of Guards, now left to themselves, with fresh courage to do their duty in the trying situation in which they were placed.

The night proved exceedingly dark ; so intense, indeed, was the gloom that the watchers could not distinguish each other's persons at the distance of a few feet.

A part of them were stationed in an old house, known as the Eccles House, while another picket was established to the west—between the hill and the road—in order to prevent a surprise from that quarter.

An arrangement was made, besides taking the above precautions, with a young man who could be relied upon, to watch the

* This young gentleman is a graduate from the Military School at Quebec, and is now captain of a company of volunteers of the 60th Battalion.

Fenian movements, and come before them to give warning of their approach.

Between ten and eleven o'clock this messenger came in great haste to say that large numbers of them were advancing, as was supposed, to take up their position on or near Eccles Hill.

Almost immediately after this message was received, the little party heard the roll of wheels along the road leading from Franklin, and listened intently to make sure if it was a single vehicle approaching, or whether the hosts arrayed against them had really taken up their line of march with the design of securing their old camping-ground under cover of the darkness.

As the sounds came nearer, they made sure there were but two carriages, which, after crossing the boundary line, slackened their horses to a walk, and the occupant of one vehicle called to a person in the other in these words:—

“We are on invaded territory. We are in Canada,” and added, “We shall be halted before we get through.”

“Who will halt us?” enquired he of the other waggon. “There are no troops on the borders, and the volunteers are not called out.”

“I tell you we *shall* be halted,” the first went on, “before we get through; for Westover’s company is out, and there is a *slew* of them.”

A moment later, and Captain Westover, who had walked forward, and was a little nearer the line than his men, gave the word the last speaker was expecting, and his “halt” brought both waggons to a sudden standstill.

He desired to know the names of the parties and their business. Their names were Frank Johnson and Clark Barney. Captain Westover, not being acquainted with the former, went forward with them to the guard-house, and called to know if any of the men knew Frank Johnson, of Highgate.

Lieutenant Galer answered in the affirmative, and afterwards they were questioned.

Barney’s business was simple, and related merely to his own family, while Johnson said he had been at St. Armand Station sometime during the day, and had been engaged by Captain P. Smith to drive from there to St. Albans and back to Cook’s Corner, and report anything of interest he might learn with regard

to the Fenian movements to one John Morris, who was to meet him there.

Captain Westover enquired who John Morris was.

Johnson confessed his ignorance, but supposed he might be a police detective.

He was then desired to report to the Home Guards, which he did,—his reports exactly agreeing with what they had before learned, in addition to which he informed them that the force which the messenger just mentioned had stated was advancing, was, for reasons with which he was entirely unacquainted, returning to their camp; that he had passed them after they turned back, and that they numbered between two and three hundred.

After giving this extremely satisfactory information, they were allowed to pass on.

It appears that the love of fun had not quite deserted the younger Guardsmen on this their first night of actual service; for it occurred, at this juncture, to Pickering and Scott to hasten forward a short distance to a cross-road leading to the road to Pigeon Hill, and halt the parties a second time, in order to make it appear that their numbers were sufficiently large to keep pickets out in all directions.

Accordingly, they had stationed themselves in the road, and were ready with their "halt!" when the waggons drove up.

The travellers appeared greatly surprised, and desired to know why they were again stopped. The picket wanted the counter-sign, and ordered them back to get it, expecting, at the same time, as they afterwards said, a severe reprimand for the part they had played.

Captain Westover was staggered when the parties returned. His first thought was that the Fenians had come in by some more circuitous route, and were behind as well as before them; and so pleased was he to find his mistake, that he could readily forgive the strategy practised by his merry Guards.

Two or three hours after this occurrence, Lieut. Galer and Mr. A. Ten Eyck being on duty together, had walked across the line and a short distance up the hill on the other side, when they heard a carriage approaching. They hastened back to the line, and Mr. Ten Eyck placed himself against the iron post, while

Lieutenant Galer stood on the opposite side of the road. Thus they waited till the waggon drove up, when a halt was ordered, and the business of the two men who were seated in it demanded.

They said they were going to report to General O'Neill, and said they had papers to prove they were all right, and one of them gave the word "Winousky," supposed to be the Fenian countersign.

Mr. Ten Eyck informed them they were in Canada, on which they endeavored to back their team around. He, however, ordered them forward at once, and, hearing something very like the "click" of cocking a rifle, they obeyed the order.

When opposite the guard-house they stopped and called for the captain, who questioned the prisoners as to their business. They answered again, "To report to General O'Neill."

They were then ordered forward to Cook's Corner under the escort of Lieut. Galer, George Longeway, Lyman Call, James McElroy and Spenser Scott, to be given in charge of the volunteer force, which they had just then learned by a special messenger from Colonel Chamberlin had arrived there in small numbers. This was between two and three o'clock on the morning of the 25th, as nearly as they could judge, being unable in the darkness to see the time.

The special messenger above-alluded to had brought word that the volunteers would be up in the morning. Captain Westover sent back a request to have them move forward at once.

When the Guards returned from escorting the prisoners to Cook's Corner, they brought a message from Adjutant Kemp to have the Home Guards "fight and fall back," and that they should be supported at the Krans Bridge!

This bridge is over Pike River on the road from Stanbridge to Cook's Corner, and by the direction of the same adjutant was taken up during these days of excitement, or rather the upper tier of planks were removed, and the lower ones so loosened that they could be hastily thrown off in case it should be deemed desirable to do so.

It may be well here to state that Colonel Chamberlin was met at the depot when he arrived at Stanbridge Station, on the evening of the 24th, by Mr. Arthur Gilmore, who took him to Stanbridge

Village, where Colonel Chamberlin had given orders for the 60th or Missisquoi Battalion to assemble. Mr. Gilmore offered to drive the Colonel at once to Eccles Hill; and sometime that same evening Messrs. Blinn and H. Ten Eyck proffered him their services to provide teams by which the volunteers, who were responding quickly to the call, could be transported that night to the front; but, singular as it may appear, these offers were all declined.

Early on the morning of the 25th, and before Colonel Chamberlin had visited Eccles Hill, he himself, accompanied by Adjutant Kemp, Captain Robinson, Corporal Seely and two privates, escorted the prisoners taken by the Home Guards to the village of Stanbridge—a distance of five miles—for safe-keeping.

At four o'clock on that morning, Lieutenant Baker arrived at Eccles with twenty-one men of the Dunham volunteers—a part of Captain Robinson's company. They called for breakfast, and Captain Westover sent them to Mr. Holden's—about a mile distant,—where they were provided with what they required.

A few hours later, Captain Bockus, and about the same number of men, came up from Stanbridge; and about ten o'clock Colonel Chamberlin, Colonel Osborne Smith, Adjutant Kemp and Captain Gascoigne arrived on the ground.

After viewing the position, and entirely approving of the course which had been pursued by the Home Guards, and also the plans they had laid down for their farther movements, Colonel Smith concluded by saying they “did not require any one to command or direct them.”

Colonel Smith remained at Eccles Hill about an hour, and then returned towards Stanbridge, accompanied by Captain Gascoigne. Before leaving, he ordered a picket of twelve men of the volunteers to the Pigeon Hill road.

Captain Westover's own men began to come in at daylight; but did not all arrive until late in the forenoon.

About eleven o'clock, a.m., Captain Westover and Mr. Andrew Ten Eyck went to Mr. Holden's to procure some dinner and make arrangements by which some of their men could be supplied.* The number of Guards left on the ground at this

* In this connection we would give a word of commendation to all those who provided food for the Home Guards and Volunteers, sparing neither pains nor expense, before suit-

time was forty-one, all of whom took part in the fight, and were ready to fire at the appointed signal.

On arriving at Mr. Holden's, they found Lieutenant Baker and seventeen men of the volunteers there before them, waiting for dinner. Just as they were commencing to eat, the report of guns warned them that the Fenians were attempting to make a stand on this side; and, although they drove with what speed they could, they, as well as the eighteen volunteers who were at table with them, were too late to take part in anything but scattering shots.

Soon after Captain Westover and Mr. Ten Eyck left to go to dinner, U. S. Marshal, Foster, with his deputy, Thomas Failey, came over, and, while he was on the Canadian side, the Fenians moved down nearer the boundary line and loaded their guns. The Marshal, seeing their movements, drove back, and the advance-guard, of what was intended as the skirmish-line, came on, accompanied by a large number of the inhabitants of the border towns, who had assembled for the purpose of seeing our people fly before the invading army.

Just before this advance-guard started, another body of the Fenians marched to the west, and took up their position on a hill quite near the line.

Some of the spectators above alluded to, appeared greatly to rejoice—though their joy proved but of short duration—as they saw some of the Home Guards run in great haste to resume their places at the base of the hill, which they had left for a short time in order to partake of a dinner kindly provided for them by Mr. and Mrs. Goddard, living near the boundary.

They had scarcely tasted the food, however, when the cry "They're coming! they're coming!" had warned them to hasten to their positions.

Some of the lookers-on from the American side secured elevated positions on high piles of lumber near Alva Rykard's, but were very soon glad to seek lowlier and safer situations.

able preparations could be made for victualling the troops. We cannot particularize, as, doubtless, many whose names are unknown to us were forward in the matter.

Since the above note was written, Mr. Landsberg has been mentioned to us as one who was extremely thoughtful of the wants of the defenders of the frontier—up to the very last furnishing valuable supplies and refusing any remuneration.

On the arrival of the Fenians at the line, the order was given by their leader "Double Quick!" so loud that the Home Guards distinctly heard it.

They came on four deep, and, as soon as the last column had passed the line, the Guards fired, according to instructions received before Captain Westover left the ground; and, at the same moment, the volunteers from the hill above, fourteen in number, now under Colonel Chamberlin's command, discharged their pieces.

At this first volley, Rowe, of Burlington, fell dead, and almost instantly the wearers of the "green" broke their line, scattered and fled for cover. Several jumped off the bridge, went under it, and crawled up between the bark-mill and tannery; others took shelter behind stone fences, piles of lumber, buildings, or anything that could afford them a cover; while some of them ran back up the road and through Rykard's field. It was while passing through this field that the other Fenian was killed.

Few of them attempted to return the fire of our people till they could do so from the sheltered situations they thus secured; but in this way a sort of desultory firing was kept up on both sides for upwards of an hour.

After the firing had slackened, but while all were in anxious expectation of a renewed and more serious attack, a question arose in regard to ammunition. Colonel Smith, whom a special messenger had brought back to take command, acknowledged his supply was scanty, saying he had sent in haste for more,—especially as regarded cartridges for the Ballards used by the Guards he was very anxious. Mr. Ten Eyck and Captain Westover informed him that at their own residences, some six or seven miles distant, they had each a reserve of one thousand rounds.

Almost instantly one of the Guards was dispatched for it, with Colonel Smith's orders to use the greatest haste, and to press the services of any party or team that he might require to expedite the matter.

In a surprisingly short time it was at hand; but very fortunately the demand for it was far less than might have been expected.

When the Fenian party crossed the boundary line, General

O'Neill, instead of heading them like a brave man, entered Alva Rykard's house, and ascended to an upper room, intending to view the conflict from afar. His stay there, however, was short, as Mr. Rykard very soon drove him from his residence.

He was dressed as a civilian, and, in consequence, was not particularly noticed by any of our men. He ran through Rykard's field to the hill where the body of Fenians mentioned above had taken up their position. This was a moment before his deceived and misguided men were flying under the spirited fire of the Home Guards and volunteers from Eccles Hill.

United States Marshal Foster was at hand to relieve O'Neill of farther uneasiness or responsibility by arresting him a few minutes after he was driven from Rykard's house. There is little doubt among the Canadians that the whole matter had been previously arranged between them.

General Lewis also, another of the so-called Fenian leaders, took up his position near Rykard's behind a pile of lumber, from whence he fired away vigorously until the smoke from his rifle betrayed his hiding-place, when some of our good marksmen so well directed their aim that the earth at his side was disturbed by the bullets and thrown over him. Upon this he stripped off uniform and accoutrements, and crawled away snake-like till at a safe distance to make a run for life.

Mr. Rykard, who had watched the whole proceeding, picked up his sword and afterwards disposed of it to the volunteers. So much for the bravery of the leaders of the Irish Republican Army.

A word here also in regard to American sympathizers may not be amiss. Amongst many we only name one. A man called Temple, an American citizen, perched himself upon a high pile of lumber in Alva Rykard's yard, to watch the Fenians attack our position, and cheered them on, clapping his hands, and calling aloud, "See the Canucks run!" as the Guards just mentioned hastened to resume their places.

One of our men hearing his words, slackened his pace, thinking if it gratified the spectators to see him run he would walk the remainder of the distance.

Now this Temple never exactly knew how he descended from his lofty perch, some 15 feet high; but when the bullets

began to whistle through the air in rather closer proximity to his head than was quite agreeable, he found himself suddenly on the ground.

He then crawled under a barn, conveniently at hand, and lay there for some hours; but at length thought best to run for a pleasanter situation. In so doing he was espied by Mr. Andrew Ten Eyck, who, mistaking him for a Fenian, fired upon him. He dashed into a thicket of brambles growing around a heap of stones, where he lay concealed some little time, the bullets cutting the briers above his head; but at length found opportunity to creep away unharmed.

We understand that Mr. Ten Eyck, being on the American side not long after, and hearing Temple telling over these adventures, informed him that he was the despised Canadian whose rifle balls had so nearly put an end to his existence.

But we must return to the main points in this simple sketch, not sorry, indeed, that our space will not further permit us to chronicle the cowardice of the Fenian generals, or the contemptible spirit manifested by their American sympathizers.

After the skirmish was over, Lt.-Col. Miller, with parts of two companies of the 52nd Battalion, which was assembling at Dunham, on learning that the Fenians were at the line, hastened forward without orders, and arrived near Eccles Hill that same afternoon at about three o'clock.

He was instructed by Colonel Smith to return to Frelighsburg, where his battalion concentrated that night—250 strong.

Early in the afternoon the Victoria Rifles and Capt. Muir's company of cavalry from Montreal were on the ground, in addition to the companies of the 60th already mentioned.

Not far from three o'clock, the Fenians displayed a flag of truce near Rykard's. The firing had entirely ceased; but Colonel Smith forbade any volunteer to notice the signal or leave his position. But about fifteen of Captain Westover's men went down the hill to the Province Line.

As the Guards approached, four or five Fenians, with Gen. Donnelly at their head, placed themselves across the road on the American side, and explained their signals by saying they wished to remove their dead and wounded. General Loneragan wished to speak to an officer. Hunter, who was one of the Guards pre-

sent, told him there was no officer with his party. Word in the meantime was taken to Colonel Smith; but he refused to hold any communication with General Lonergan.

Mrs. Eccles, taking advantage of the opportunity, as soon as the flag of truce was hoisted, came out from her dwelling, waved a white cloth, and walked down the road to where Rowe's dead body lay, took the gun from the corpse and returned home with it.

The Fenians were not allowed to carry off their dead or wounded, and the parley was soon ended, though some sharp words passed between General Donnelly and the Home Guards.

In the course of the afternoon Colonel Smith learned that a party of Fenians, with a small field-piece, were in the valley to the right; but there was no attempt made to bring it to bear on the position just then.

As all continued quiet between four and five o'clock, Captain Westover proposed to return home with his men. Both Colonel Smith and Colonel Chamberlin urged him strongly to remain through the night. He replied that there could be no necessity for their stopping, as twelve men of the Home Guards had held the ground the preceding night.

A few moments later Colonel Smith came to him again and renewed his entreaties, saying he had just received intimation that the Fenians were rallying on the American side, and would attack the position at six o'clock.

Captain Westover then consented to remain, and did not leave the field until seven o'clock, p.m. Nothing meantime, however, was seen or heard of an approaching enemy.

A few of the Guards remained, though the majority left about the time Captain Westover did.

During the afternoon several different parties had asked permission of Colonel Smith and Colonel Chamberlin to go down and search the tannery and out-buildings, as several Fenians had been seen to run there for cover in the fight.

The Colonels steadily refused, however, to give their consent until nearly night—after Captain Westover had left the ground—when the following conversation took place between Col. Smith and S. N. Hunter:—

COL. SMITH—"Cannot you and some of your Home Guards

stay here with us to-night? There is not much doubt but we shall be attacked again during the night, and I think it would encourage the volunteers if they knew that some of you were here with those little rifles of yours."

HUNTER—"Yes, sir; I will stay if you will allow me to take some of the Home Guards and go down and search the tannery, and bring up that dead Fenian. If not I will go home."

COL. SMITH—"I cannot control you; but I will not let one of my volunteers go down, and I am afraid that some of you will get shot."

Hunter then told him that he did not wish any of the volunteers to go, as he thought he would get help enough without to effect his purpose.

The Home Guards present were quite ready to accompany him. They made, however, one request of Colonel Smith, which was that he should cover them with his men as they went down, and this he did.

By these means the buildings were cleared near the boundary line, and several Fenians were wounded while trying to escape, being fired upon both by the Guards and the volunteers from the hill. The frightened creatures evidently supposed our troops were designing to follow them to their camp.

The Fenian field-piece was fired two or three times; but without damaging our people. Those who had charge of it soon retreated, dragging it after them nearly to their camping-ground.

The flying Fenians carried consternation along with them, and a general panic was created—both officers and men believing that the Canadians were following hard on their track.

The Home Guards removed the dead Fenian from the road to the hill, where a shallow grave was dug, and he was buried,—not with the indignities commonly reported, but something as one of an invading army might expect to be interred by his enemies—certainly without mourning or lamentation.

A party of young men that same evening went over, and, by a circuitous route, approached quite near the Fenian camp, and after night-fall wheeled the cannon away from where it had been left, when one Hannibal Yates drew it over and placed it in his father's barn, who lives near the boundary, opposite Pigeon Hill.

In the morning Lieut. Galer, C. S. Galer and others of the

Home Guards removed it to Pigeon Hill, and in the afternoon it was taken to Frelighsburg, where it remained until the following Saturday. But a rumor having got abroad that it was to be stolen away and taken back to the American side, Mr. Andrew Ten Eyck and Captain Westover went to the village and took possession of it for the Home Guards, and removed it to Captain Westover's premises, where it still remains.

On the morning of the 26th the company of Home Guards went again to Eccles Hill, in accordance with a promise made the previous night.

Sometime in the forenoon Colonel Osborne Smith requested that they should form in line, as he wished to address them, which he did after the following manner :—

He thanked them warmly in his own name, and in the name of the Government, for the important service they had rendered the country by the promptness of their action ; and added, that by their occupation of Eccles Hill on the night of the 24th, and holding it until the volunteer force arrived, they had, without doubt, saved many valuable lives, and a vast amount of treasure, as, had the Fenians been allowed to gain that point, it would have been an exceedingly difficult matter to have dislodged them from so strong a position.

Furthermore, after many flattering compliments, he stated that he, as commanding officer there, should take care that their conduct was properly represented at headquarters, and that the Government should know to whose promptness of action so much was due.

As all continued quiet through the day, in the afternoon Captain Westover and his men left for their respective homes, thinking they were done with the Fenian affair, now that the frontier was so well protected.

About six o'clock, however, on that same evening a messenger came to Captain Westover's in great haste, bearing a note from Colonel Chamberlin, written from Frelighsburg, of which the following is a faithful copy :—

“ FRELIGHSBURG, Thursday.

“ DEAR WESTOVER,

“ The latest news is that O'Neill has rallied the Fenians again at Burlington, and we may expect them back again. Can you muster

twenty or thirty Red Sashes between this and morning, and be ready at the old place for an attack at daylight to-morrow morning—the most probable time for a renewed attack upon our position. I write at request of Lieutenant-Colonel Smith in command here. Don't fail us.

“ Yours truly,

“ B. CHAMBERLIN.

“ A. WESTOVER, ESQ., Company Sharpshooters.”

This request, of course, hastened the Guards to the field at the appointed hour. The 52nd Battalion, under Lt.-Col. Miller, which it will be remembered had been stationed at Frelighsburg, was also removed before daylight to Eccles Hill; but, doubtless to the satisfaction of all parties there, this alarm proved a false one also.

We have given in substance Colonel Smith's address to the Home Guards, and the above note from Colonel Chamberlin, to show clearly in what estimation the “irregular body of men,” so curtly spoken of by both gentlemen a few days after, was held in at this juncture,—to show whose courage and daring were most relied upon when danger a second time unexpectedly threatened the position.

We have now nearly done with the Fenian alarms along our border in May, 1870, and little more remains to be said.

The volunteers already mentioned of the 52nd Battalion remained in camp at Eccles Hill until the end of the following week, when they were sent home.

The 60th Battalion, the company of Victoria Rifles, a company of Prince of Wales' corps, under Captain Rogers, which arrived from St. Johns on the morning of the 27th, also remained in camp at the same place, until sent home with Captain Muir's company of cavalry.

The Cookshire Cavalry, under Lieut. Taylor, were stationed at Frelighsburg from 28th May to June 4th.

Frequent rumors of threatened invasion kept these volunteers always on their guard, and their duties were by no means light while in camp.

On the 30th May, Lieut.-General Lindsay and his staff, accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Arthur, Colonel Lord Alexander Russel, Lieut.-Col. Thackwell, D. A. G., Lieut.-Col.

McPherson, D. A. G. of Militia, and other officers, both of the regular service and militia, visited the camp at Eccles Hill.

Colonel Chamberlin apprized Captain Westover that General Lindsay and staff were expected to be on the ground at 3 p. m., and politely requested that some of the Home Guards would be present on the occasion.

The troops were addressed as follows by General Lindsay:—

“COLONEL SMITH, OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE FORCE OF THE MILITIA NOW HERE: I have come to-day to give myself the gratification of seeing you after your short service in the field. This short service was, however, of the very highest service to the country. A portion, not the whole of you, comprising a detachment of the 60th Battalion, and a portion of those who had formed themselves into a Home Guard, were the first to meet the Fenians, and were soon supported by every soldier sent to the front. The moment the men heard of the attack they came up.

“Captain Muir’s troop of cavalry, and a portion of the Victoria Rifles also took part in the fighting of the day. All by their good service, the energy and promptitude they have shown, have achieved, as a result, the utter defeat and demoralization of the Fenians. Now, with regard to the first portion of the attack, I congratulate Lieutenant-Colonel Chamberlin upon the success which so soon attended his taking up the present position, and to most of you now here the success is due. Col. Chamberlin and those under his command met that attack with determination.

“But I wish to impress on you first that the repulse was due to the accuracy of the fire. This it was which turned off the attack. I don’t mean to say that it saved the frontier; but you were saved the risk of further annoyance, and the cost in blood, and otherwise of retaking the frontier, by the accuracy of the fire, and the gallantry and spirit all displayed in seizing and holding it—the volunteers from Montreal as well as from the vicinity, and the people here.

“There are two or three facts which I may state. You are successful, and your success is due to your own efforts. No one else has helped you. The regulars were, however, ready to start to your assistance at an hour’s notice, and held a position most important for defence. They were at St. Johns, which commands both banks of the Richelieu, and could have repelled any attack on either flank. But you resisted and repelled this attack yourselves. Another thing should be noticed. The President of the United States issued a proclamation, very proper and friendly in itself, but of no actual use to you, as you had to repel that attack yourselves. The United States have sent troops, which are near at hand; but you had to do the work yourselves. That work you did, assisted by those who bear the cognomen of the Home Guards. As Lieutenant-General commanding Her Majesty’s forces in Canada, I thank you; but not simply in that military capacity. As Lieutenant-General I also

represent the Queen and Governor-General, who represents the Queen; and in their name I also thank you.

"I have also the very great satisfaction of being accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Arthur, who is also on service in Canada with his regiment, the Rifle Brigade, and who is now on the staff of Colonel Lord Alexander Russell. He also was ready to help you to repel any attack made on you. I thank you, therefore, I say, in the name of the Queen, the Governor-General and Prince Arthur, and, with you, the whole Militia of Canada. You all nobly came forward quickly, readily, and in great numbers; indeed, I never saw greater readiness. The Militiamen may feel proud of the manner in which they supported you, the officers and each other.

"Lieut.-Col. Osborne Smith I congratulate most heartily. He has often been in command on the frontier, and has often been under me during the raid of 1866; in fact I was here, and had a great deal to do with the volunteers. I may say I had even something to do in sending Colonel Smith to command here, feeling satisfied that his minute and thorough knowledge of every road, stream, hill and plain—I might almost say fence—on our exposed frontier, his previous service and acquaintance with the details of military life, in addition to his great natural military abilities, rendered him peculiarly fitted for this command, and that he was certain to repel any and every attack made upon us. To the cavalry my thanks are due. I fully recognize their services in the pressing emergency, and a more useful body there could not be than they have shown themselves. I have nothing more to say just now, but would ask you to give three cheers for the Queen."

These were heartily given, and were followed by cheers for the Governor-General and Prince Arthur. Gen. Lindsay then went on to say:—

"I now ask you to give three cheers more for your fellow soldiers of the volunteers who so recently served on the Huntingdon frontier. When the emergency took place there, I hastened to send the 69th Regiment to the front. It was accompanied to the threatened point by the Huntingdon Borderers, the Montreal Artillery and Engineers and several other corps; and when this force took up its advance for the Fenian line, so confident did Col. Rogers feel with regard to the volunteers, that he did not hesitate to place the Borderers in a position where they would be exposed to the first fire. I need not tell you the result. As here, the Fenians did not wait for the attack, but fled, demoralized and in disorder."

General Lindsay had some conversation with Captain Westover, and in the course of it said they would like to see the little cannon in Montreal, to which Captain Westover replied that they

claimed it as belonging to the Home Guards, and wished to keep it here ; but would have no objection to their taking it to Montreal if they would return it again.

General Lindsay said, " Certainly ; but we would like to show it in Montreal."

Shortly after he returned to Captain Westover in company with Col. Smith, and requested him, and as many of the Guards as could conveniently do so, to accompany the little field-piece to Montreal ; and directed Colonel Smith to make the necessary arrangements for bringing it in when the camp broke up. Whereupon Colonel Smith promised to notify Captain Westover when they would leave—in time for them to be in readiness,—saying they would take a special train, and all go in together. But from that hour nothing has been heard of the special train, or a desire to see the little cannon, or any of the Guards, in Montreal.

One circumstance we would mention was matter of serious annoyance to the Home Guards at this time. They have reason to believe their badge to have been assumed by O'Neill's spies on the day of the fight, and by many others, who afterwards visited the volunteers' camp.

It is believed that persons wearing this badge, but having not the least connection with the original organization, not only succeeded in roving undisturbed through their camp, but also behaved in a very improper manner to many of them while stationed at Eccles Hill ; and, in order to guard against anything of the sort in future, a plain suit of gray tweed, with a peculiar stripe and dark trimmings, has since been adopted by those who claim to belong to this company of Home Guards.

Since the enactment of the exciting scenes recounted in the foregoing pages, at the suggestion of Captain Westover, the local councils of the municipalities of Dunham and St. Armand East have made special appropriations of money for defensive purposes, and the purchase of ammunition to be kept as a reserve for the use of the Home Guards, in case of another attack upon our frontier, in order that the expense of such an undertaking as the defence of our homes should not fall, as before, upon the few

who were willing not only to spend their money, but risk their lives in the cause.

It may not be out of place here also to state that the spirit of determination which influenced the few on a former occasion to act on the defensive, without waiting for the military organizations, has spread to such an extent that there is little room to doubt that, should we be threatened with another invasion, the call to arms would be much more largely responded to than before by the inhabitants of the border towns.





